

Haisla Entrepreneur Loan Program (HELP)

yáqwa is responsible for administering the Haisla Entrepreneur Loan Program, referred to as HELP. HELP was established to provide Haisla status members with administrative and financial support to successfully pursue entrepreneurial endeavours.

Many Haisla status members have benefitted from HELP, and today run successful, meaningful and rewarding businesses servicing our community and beyond.

Are you thinking about starting a new business or going out on your own? Read more about the funding guidelines and apply today.

Funding Guidelines

Eligibility :

Applicants seeking the support and financial assistance from the Haisla Nation must meet the following criteria:

- A Haisla status member in good standing
- If applying as a corporation the registered Haisla status member must own 100% of the business
- The Haisla status member must work full time in the business

The business must be aligned with the principles of the Haisla Nation. Some opportunities may not be socially acceptable and yáqwa reserves the right to deny an application in these instances. The Haisla status member business must not have a competing interest with any existing nation joint ventures or limited partners.

Types of Funded or Supported Initiatives:

- Administrative support in the start-up of the business venture
- Identification of the hard and soft costs, working capital, assets required, personnel requirements, educational support, pro forma cash flow and income statements as well as market segment identification
- Assistance in developing a marketing plan for your product or service including identifying the market segments and target markets
- Assist in market awareness campaigns with industry and proponents in Haisla territory
- Assistance in identifying the proper business structure for the venture



Unsupported Business Costs:

- Land and buildings
- Assets already acquired or under ownership
- Assets that are already supported by another funding group or body
- Assets purchased from unknown sources; must be purchased from established an entity
- Loan payments to other funding agencies or personal loans, personal expenses not related to the business, dividends to investors or other shareholder payments
- Costs for the following items; inventory, investments such as public shares or marketable securities, goodwill and intangible assets

Types of Funding:

Established or existing businesses will have the ability to apply for a business loan. The applicant must factor in the cost of repayment in the financial statements provided with the application. Loans will have the following terms:

- Payment terms (e.g., 24, 36 or 48 months); the payment term will depend on the use of funds and the financial situation of the business
- An interest rate (current 'A' lending institution rates will apply)
- Defined monthly payment

In order for the Haisla status member to remain in good standing with yáqʷa and to have access to HELP in the future they must have fully repaid the borrowed amount plus applicable interest.

If the applicant is successful in obtaining a HELP loan, the business is responsible to repay the loan. yáqʷa may take a general securities agreement to ensure repayment.

If the member is unable to meet the payment schedule as defined in the loan agreement then the member will meet with yáqʷa representation and agree on a repayment schedule.

If the Haisla status member makes all of the loan payments in full and on time once the loan has been repaid by 60% the Haisla Nation will forgive the remaining 40% of the balance owed.

Grant Funding:

yáqʷa is focused on supporting new entrepreneurs as we understand the challenges in acquiring funding from external parties. As such we have created the grant funding application.

Haisla status members may apply for grant funding. External funding sources for loans may require a 15% cash equity amount in order for the business owner to qualify. The Nation may approve grant funding for the 15% up to a maximum amount of \$15,000. Requirements include:

- Commitment letter for financing from other sources (Bank, Tricorp, NDIT, etc.)
- Haisla status member in good standing
- Must own 100% of the business
- Must work full time in business
- Must not compete with Haisla Nation businesses

Funding Amounts:

The following levels have been identified for the funding of applications to the membership:

Stage	Funding Amount	Decision Timeline
Stage 1 Approval	\$1 - \$50,000	30 – 45 days
Stage 2 Approval	\$50,001 - \$99,000	46 – 60 days

Application Process:

The following information must accompany the application for funding:

- Business Plan
- List of corporate assets for collateral
- Proof of 15% personal contribution in cash, assets or Intellectual property
- Proof of 100% ownership
- Pro Forma financial statements for a minimum of 5 years
- Actual financial statements for a minimum of 2 years (for existing business only)
- List of other funding agencies where applications have been filed
- Proof of funding from other agencies

Types of Non-Monetary Support:

As part of HELP, yáqʷa also provides access to a number of services to assess the feasibility of business plans, support the development of a complete Application, and more. These include:

- Business Plan development support
- Financial Statement review
- Market Survey Support
- Support applying with other funding agencies and grant opportunities
- Introductions to Industrial and Commercial Clients through yáqʷa and HNC relationships

Applicant Evaluation Criteria:

Each application will be evaluated independently taking into consideration the information provided as well as any independent information attained through yáqʷa's own research, such as market research, commitment letters, funding support, or otherwise. yáqʷa will consider the financial viability of the venture along with community benefit and impact in its decision. The approval or denial of the application will be based on the following areas:

- Complete application with all information provided
- The project's financial viability
- The feasibility of the business and execution strategy
- The owner(s) have a minimum of 15% financial or otherwise contribution to start up the business
- Applicant has relevant experience to own and operate the business (in cases of partnership this can be from an outside source as long as the member owns 100% and there is a plan for the transfer of knowledge that can be measured)

Application Review Process:

All applications will go through a minimum of two (2) reviews before funding approval is provided:

- **Stage 1 Review:** (1) Finance representative, (1) Economic Development representative and either yáqʷa CEO, Manager of Partnerships, Manager of Business Development or other subject matter experts
- **Stage 2 Review:** The Review Committee

Once this review has occurred the review committee will make a formal recommendation to accept or deny the application. The review committee reserves the right to approve with conditions or provide a denial to the application with amendments and an appeal once the amendments are complete.

Appeal Process for Application:

Applicants may appeal the decision within 30 days of the denial notification. In order for the appeal process to accept the application for appeal the applicant must be able to prove the following:

- New, relevant information is available that is positively impactful to the business projections or the success of the business;
- A significant change has occurred in the application related to items that resulted in the denial of the application

In the appeal request, the applicant must identify the reason for the denial, the key areas that have changed and the date of the denied application.

The appeals board will be formed by one (1) member of the Board of Directors, one (1) member of the Review Committee and one (1) Chief Executive Officer.

Monitoring the Business:

The applicant will provide annual financial statements to yáqʷa. If for any reason a meeting is needed to discuss the financial situation of the business, the member will make themselves available. Additionally, if information is required, the member will be cooperative as long as the request is reasonable in nature. Other documents may be requested as a part of the verification process such as; incorporation documents, partnership agreement, evidence of proper insurance, WCB in good standing, etc.

The duration of monitoring will be determined by whether it is a loan or grant to the member business. Loans will be monitored for the duration of the loan term (for example, if the loan is a 36-month term then the monitoring will take place for the 36 months). Grants will be monitored quarterly for a two-year period.

For more information:

If you have questions about **HELP** and if it is right for you, reach out to us today:

- Lisa Grant, Manager, Business Development: lgrant@yaqwadecorp.com

Learn more about yáqʷa at www.yaqwadecorp.com